

Washoe County Planning Commission



WSUP23-0020

PSREC

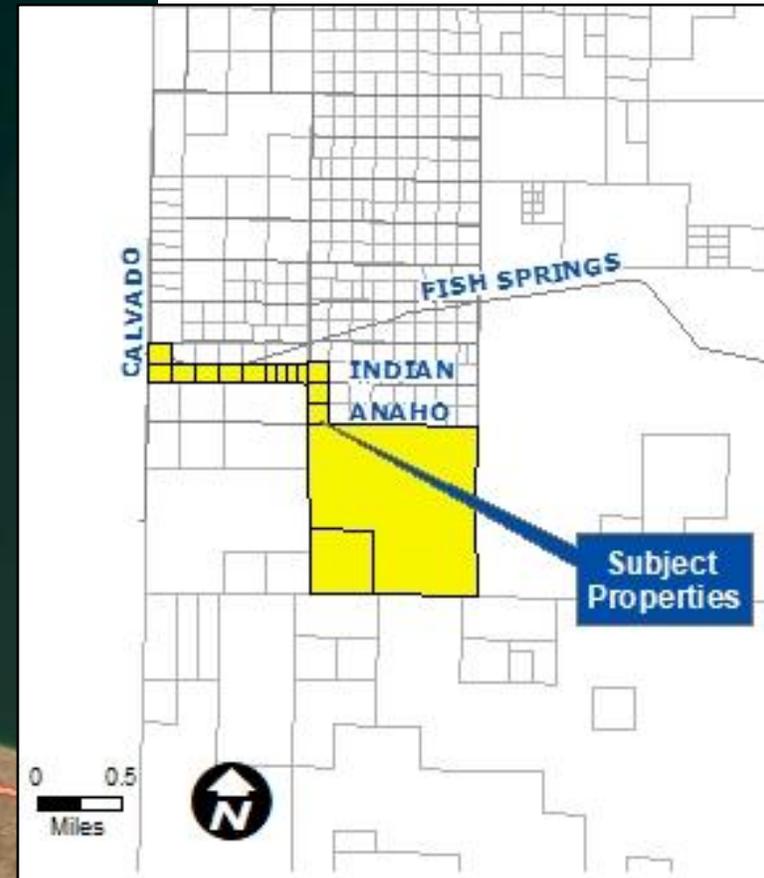
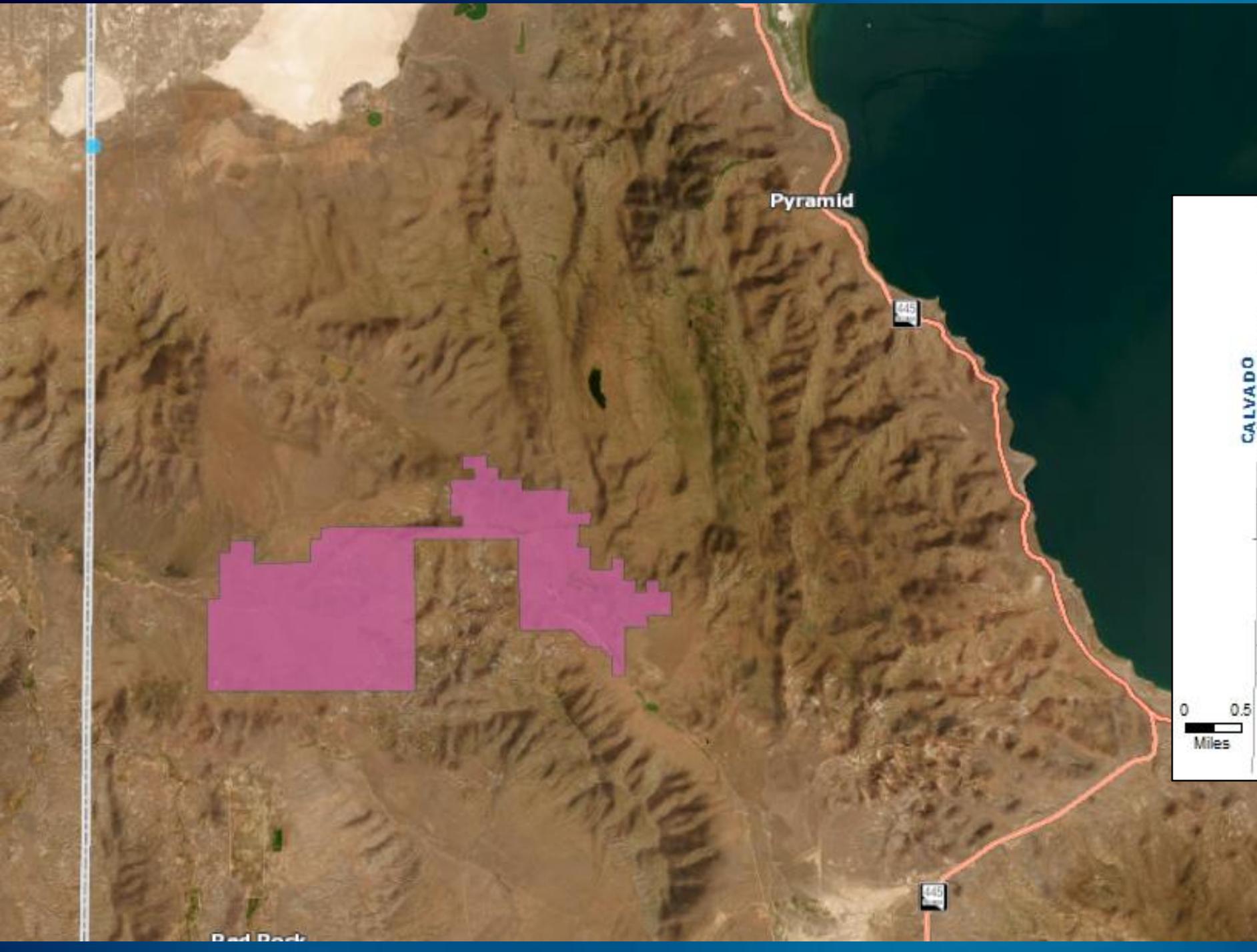
September 5, 2023

Request



1. This is a request for a Special Use Permit for:
 1. A Major Public Facility use type for an extension of a 2-mile long 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission line; and
 2. To modify standards waiving all civic landscaping requirements, and to varying the maximum height of 35' to allow for structures to be 65' in height.

It also meets the standard for a Project of Regional Significance because it entails construction of a transmission line that carries 60 kV or more and requires amendments to the Regional Utility Corridor Map to identify the location of the new transmission line.



Background



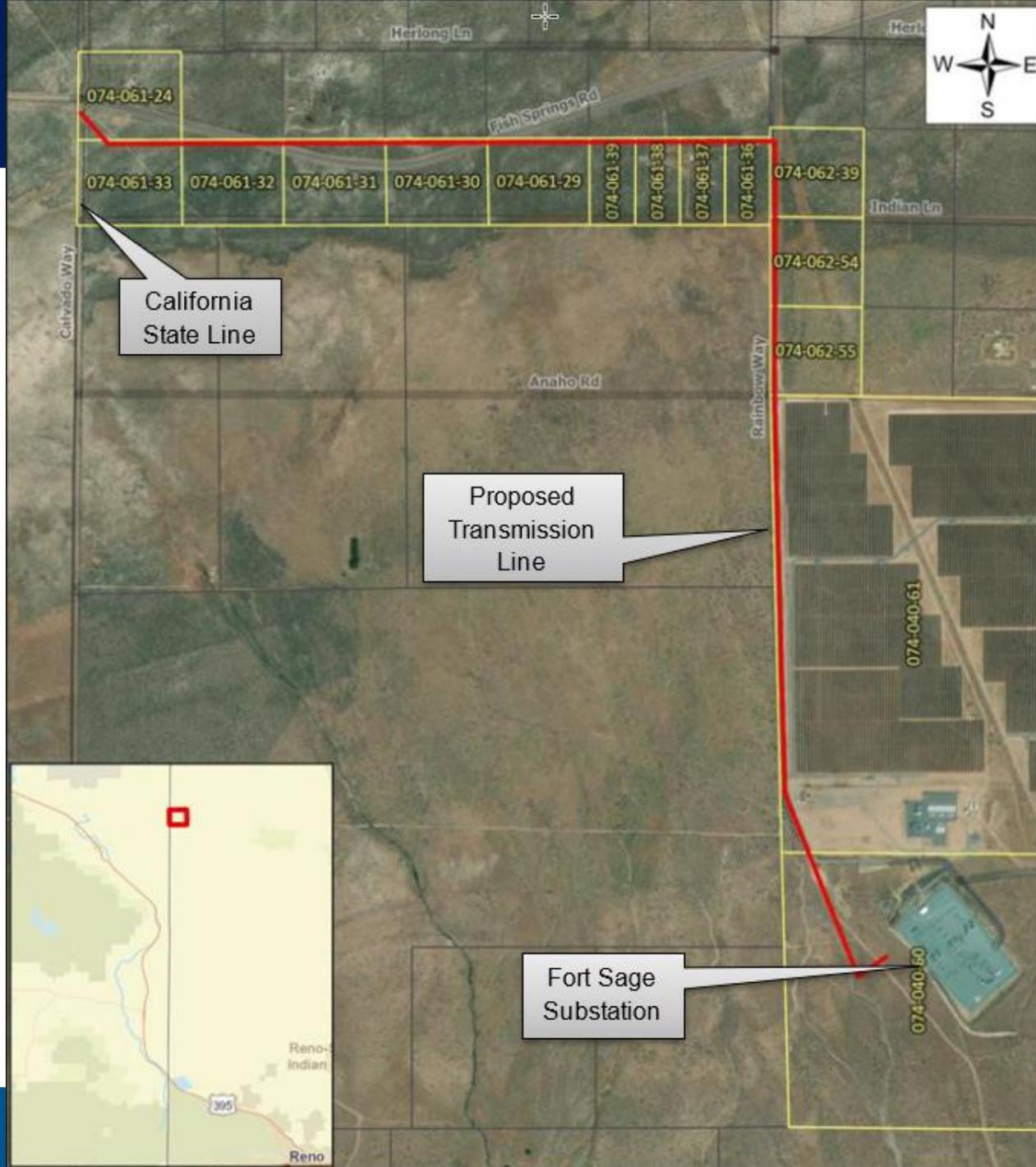
- The Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative (PSREC) was founded in 1937 to bring power to Plumas, Lassen, and Sierra Counties. PSREC is a member-owned electric utility and is not-for-profit.
- According to the applicant, "It currently serves approximately 8,000 customers in eastern Sierra Nevada, including portions of Lassen, Plumas, Sierra, and Washoe (NV) Counties."
- PSREC also serves ±450 households in the Red Rock community.

Designations



- The master plan designation for the parcels is rural (R) and regulatory zoning is general rural (GR) as are the surrounding parcels.
- The land is undeveloped, with the State of California to the west and Fish Springs Solar and NV Energy Fort Sage Substation located on the two parcels in the southern portion of the proposed development.
- The transmission line will be located within an existing utility easements along Rainbow Way and then continuing west between Herlong Lane and Indiana Lane to California

Site Plan



Evaluation



- The extension is from Fort Sage Substation to the State of California, consisting of approximately 35 poles along the 2-mile route.
- The 65-foot high, two-foot diameter poles will be approximately 300 feet apart and should have minimal disturbance to the area.
- The existing utility easements varies in width from 50 feet wide north of Rainbow Way to 60-100 feet wide to the California state line.
- There are currently no other utility uses in the easement.

Evaluation



- The extension according to the applicant will provide the following:
 - Increase reliability of service to +/- 450 homes in Red Rock.
 - Increase reliability of service from wildfire issues.
 - Assist the Sierra Army Depot achieve compliance with the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act.
 - Increase reliability of service to the Federal Correctional Institute (Herlong) and High Desert State Prison (Susanville).

Evaluation



- The transmission line is unmanned, and any need parking will primarily be from Fort Sage Substation, which has parking.
- The only grading on the site will be directly beneath the tower and the applicant has indicated that the grading will not result in more than 4 acres of disturbed area and no more than 5,000 cy of cut or fill.
- No wildlife habitat areas were identified in the area by the Master Plan.
- NDOW provided comments and conditions that have been incorporated into the conditions of approval to address their concerns

Modifications



1. Table 110.406.05.1: The allowed height for GR is 35 feet.

- Staff Comment: The applicant is requesting to allow 65 foot tall towers. Staff supports the wavier as 65-feet is the typical standard height for the type of proposed transmission tower.

2. 110.412.40(a, c & d) Coverage, Landscaped Buffers Adjoining Residential Uses & Screening Adjoining Residential Uses

- Staff Comment: The applicant is requesting to waive the landscaping coverage requirement of 20% and the required screening for civic use types adjacent to residential uses. The application indicates the located is remote, with few residences and there is very little vegetation, which is low-lying. Staff supports the wavier as the transmission lines are located in a remote area with native vegetation and no available water for irrigation. Additional there are few established residences in the area and the proposed transmission line will be difficult to screen.

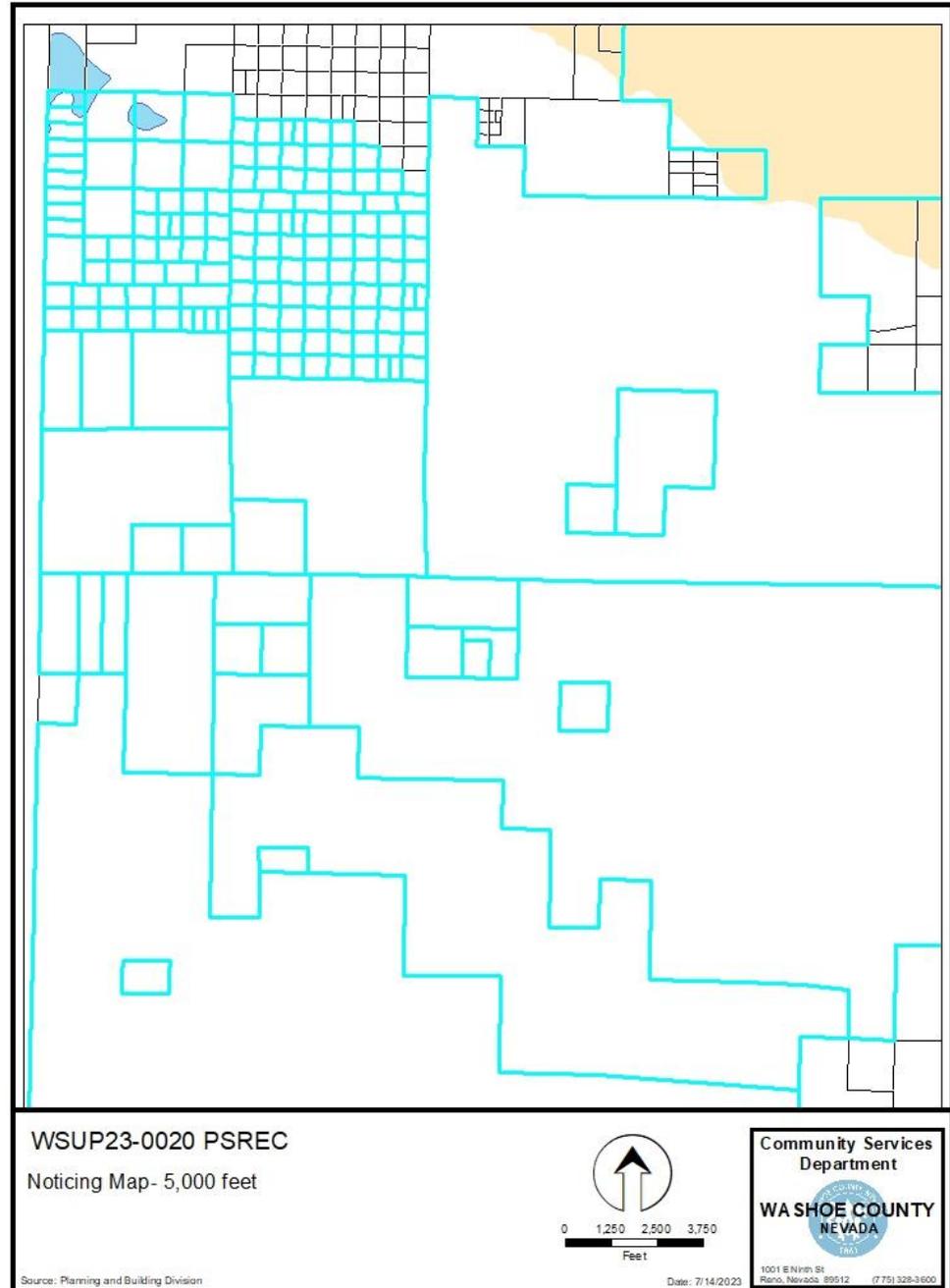
Neighborhood Meeting



- A neighborhood meeting was held via zoom on June 28, 2023 with two members of the public attending.
- The applicant presented a PowerPoint about the project and there was one question concerning water during construction

Noticing

- 42 parcels were noticed within 5,000 feet of the site
- No emails or phone calls were received.



Reviewing Agencies & Findings



- Various agencies reviewed the application, their comments are included in the staff report
- Agencies with conditions, are included in the Conditions of Approval
- Staff is able to make the required findings, as shown in the staff report and recommends approval

Possible Motion



I move that, after giving reasoned consideration to the information contained in the staff report and information received during the public hearing, the Washoe County Planning Commission approve with conditions Special Use Permit Case Number WSUP23-0020 for Plumas Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative (PSREC), with the conditions included as Exhibit A to this matter, having made all five findings in accordance with Washoe County Code Section 110.810.30. I further move to vary the development code standard in Table 110.406.05.1 to allow structures up to 65 feet in height and to waive the landscaping standards of Article 412 of the Washoe County Development Code

Thank you

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